made by our Finance Minister on 28th March, 2005 during a Question and Answer session at the Inaugural Lecture of the 'Global Business Leaders Series' of the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) and Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI).

(d) and (e) There are a few issues to be resolved in the areas of Trade in Services, Financial Services, Telecom, Investment and Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) for which negotiations with Singapore are going on.

Expert group on patents legislation

4341. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH. Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has set up an expert group to look into the Patents Legislation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) when the expert committee is expected to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) A Technical Expert Group on certain specific Patents law issues has been set up comprising:

(i)	Dr. R. A. Mashelkar, Director General, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi	Chairman
(ii)	Prof. Goverdhan Mehta, Director, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore	Member
(iii)	Prof. Asis Datta, Director, National Centre for Plant Genome Research, New Delhi	Member
(iv)	Prof. Madhav Menon, Director, National Judicial Academy, Bhopal	Member
(v)	Prof. Moolchand Sharma, Director, National Law Institute University, Bhopal	Member

The terms of reference of the Group are as under:

(i) whether it would be TRIPs (Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) compatible to limit the grant of patent for pharmaceutical substance to new chemical entity or to new medical entity involving one or more inventive steps; and

(ii) whether it would be TRIPs compatible to exclude micro-organisms from patenting.

The Group held its first meeting on 29th April, 2005. The report of the Group is awaited.

Meeting of NMCC

4342. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the first meeting of the newly constituted National manufacturing Competitiveness Council has taken place recently;

(b) the details of the discussions that tookplace in the meeting; and

(c) the decision taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (c) The first meeting of the National manufacturing Competitiveness Council (NMCC) was held on 6.1.2005 and taken a decision to form 11 Working Groups to suggest sector specific initiatives in order to make the Indian industry globally competitive: 9 Working Groups had already held detailed discussions with various stakeholders. The NMCC is in the process of formulating the strategy for intervention.

Gom on SEZs

4343. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state: